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TAGS: [KCRM](#) [ICTY](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SR](#)
SUBJECT: WAR CRIMES ROUNDTABLE HIGHLIGHTS CROSS-
BORDER COOPERATION

Sensitive But Unclassified, Please Handle
Accordingly.

¶1. (SBU) Summary: A war crimes conference held in Belgrade to commemorate the second anniversary of the 2005 signing of the Croatia-Serbia MOU on war crimes cooperation highlighted the significant achievements that have been made since the MOU in establishing cooperation and cross-border collaboration as well as recognizing needed improvements. In a political climate dominated by coalition negotiations and Kosovo status, news related to domestic prosecutions may be the best vehicle to ensure that war crimes issues are kept in the public eye in the coming months. End summary.

¶2. (U) On February 5 at Belgrade's Sava Center, war crimes prosecutors from Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia met with representatives from various entities including the OSCE, UNDP, ICTY, local embassies, journalists and various humanitarian associations to mark the second anniversary of the signing of the Croatia-Serbia MOU on implementation and promotion of cooperation in fighting all forms of serious crime. An estimated audience of fifty listened to remarks by war crimes prosecutors and deputy chief state prosecutors from each of the three republics as well as the Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia, and screened a short documentary film entitled "Justice in the Region".

¶3. (U) The conference focused on achievements since the MOU signing and the ongoing cross-border collaboration among the three republics. Representatives agreed that the MOU established positive neighborly relations for the western Balkan region and has been extremely useful in providing a solid foundation for cooperation and accountability between Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia. The program also highlighted improvements needed to increase efficiency and turnaround time in the justice system. Topping this list is a need for better collection and exchange of technical data in order to ensure efficient information sharing. Attendees also noted lack of qualified staff to handle the workloads in the war crimes offices.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: This roundtable was a good exchange on the substance of cross-border collaboration in domestic war crimes prosecutions, though it also shed light on inefficiencies. More importantly, though, it kept war crimes in the public eye. Given the total lack of action under the government's ICTY "Action Plan", the political instability created by coalition negotiations, and the domination of the political agenda by the Kosovo issue, domestic prosecutions will be a useful - and perhaps unique - vehicle for ensuring war crimes issues are not swept under the rug in the coming months.

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